IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 19-43, as presently pending in the subject application, as follows:

Please amend claim 19 a second time, as follows:

---

19. (Twice Amended) A method of incorporating fibriform smoke-modifying material in a smoking material rod, the method, comprising:

providing a smoking material rod-making machine;

including a suction band in said smoking material rod making machine, said suction band having a travel direction, said suction band forming a smoking material deposition run having a start and an end;

applying a suction force to said suction band;

depositing particulate smoking material on said suction band along said smoking material deposition run between said start and said end of said smoking material deposition run;

providing a pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material having a degree of rigidity;

providing a longitudinal feed path for said pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material to follow in said smoking material rod-making machine, said longitudinal feed path being in said travel direction of said smoking material deposition run of said suction band of said smoking material rod-making machine;

feeding said pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material to said longitudinal feed path;

causing said longitudinal feed path to be followed by said pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material to start ascending toward said suction band, under the influence of said suction force, at a distance along said smoking material deposition run intermediate said start and end of said smoking material deposition run;

supporting said pre-formed fibriform material and maintaining said pre-formed fibriform material at a position spaced from said suction band by said particulate smoking material deposited on said suction band before, in said travel direction, said ascending of said longitudinal feed path; and

depositing additional particulate smoking material on said suction band along said smoking material deposition run after, in said travel direction, said start of said ascending of said longitudinal feed path.

Please amend claim 20 a second time, as follows:

20. (Twice Amended) The method according to claim 19 further including providing said pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material in the form of a single, continuous, fibriform element.

Please amend claims 24-28 a second time, as follows:

24. (Twice Amended) The method according to claim 19 further including causing said feed path of said pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material to be ascending at an angle and controlling said angle of said ascending of said feed path of said pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material so that said angle of said ascending of said feed path is not more than about 5 degrees from horizontal.

25. (Twice Amended) The method according to claim 19 further including feeding said pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material to said smoking material rod-making machine at a fixed speed in relation to a speed at which said smoking material rod-making machine is run.

26. (Twice Amended) A method of incorporating fibriform smoke-modifying material in a smoking rod material, said method comprising:

providing a smoking material rod-making machine;

including a suction band in said smoking material rod-making machine, said suction band having a travel direction and forming a smoking material deposition run having a start and an end;

applying a suction force to said suction band;

depositing particulate smoking material on said suction band along said

smoking material deposition run between said start and said end of said smoking material deposition run;

providing a pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material having a degree of rigidity;

providing a longitudinal feed path for said pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material to follow in said smoking material rod-making machine, said longitudinal feed path in said smoking material rod-making machine extending in said travel direction of said smoking material deposition run of said suction band of said smoking material rod-making machine;

C3

providing a guide in said smoking material rod-making machine;

feeding said pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material to said guide;

constraining said pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material by said guide in said smoking material rod-making machine to follow said longitudinal feed path spaced from said suction band and to be constrained against movement in response to said suction force toward said suction band until a distance along said smoking material deposition run intermediate said start and said end of said smoking material deposition run, said pre-formed fibriform material being supported and maintained at a position spaced from said suction band by particulate smoking material deposited on said suction band before, in said travel direction, and by said guide; and

depositing additional particulate smoking material on said suction belt along said smoking material deposition run after, in said travel direction, said guide.

27. (Twice Amended) The method according to claim 26 further including providing said pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material as a single, continuous, fibriform element.

C3

28. (Twice Amended) The method according to claim 26 further including feeding said pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material to and into contact with said particulate smoking material as a sequence of discrete pre-formed fibriform elements.

Please amend claim 32 a second time, as follows:

---

32. (Twice Amended) The method according to claim 26 further including feeding said pre-formed fibriform material along said longitudinal feed path which extends beneath said smoking material deposition run at a constant vertical distance from said suction band.

C4

Please amend claim 38 a second time, as follows:

---

38. (Twice Amended) A method for incorporating a fibriform element in a smoking material rod, said method comprising:

C5

providing a smoking material rod making machine having a moving suction band having a start and an end;

exerting a suction force on said moving suction band;

using said suction force exerted on said moving suction band for supporting and transporting particulate smoking material deposited on said moving suction band;

feeding a pre-formed fibriform element to said smoking material rod making machine along a longitudinal feed path, said longitudinal feed path being generally parallel to a direction of travel of said moving suction band in said smoking material rod making machine;

C5

entering said pre-formed fibriform element into said smoking material rod making machine along said longitudinal feed path at a distance spaced from said moving suction band;

causing said pre-formed fibriform element to ascend toward said moving suction band due to said suction force at a location intermediate said start and said end of said moving suction band, said pre-formed fibriform element contacting a layer of said particulate smoking material deposited on said moving suction band before said intermediate location; and

depositing additional smoking material on said moving suction band and on said pre-formed fibriform element subsequent to said intermediate location and subsequent to said entering of said pre-formed fibriform element into said smoking material rod machine.

Please amend claims 40-43, as follows:

40. (Amended) A method of incorporating fibriform smoke-modifying material in smoking rod material, said method comprising:

feeding longitudinally a pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material having a degree of rigidity to a rod making machine along a feed path, said feed path in said machine extending in a travel direction of a smoking material deposition run of a suction band of said machine and said feed path in said machine ascending toward said smoking material deposition run;

providing a guide for said pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material in said rod making machine;

constraining said pre-formed fibriform material by using said guide in said machine so that said pre-formed fibriform material follows said feed path spaced from said run of said suction band and is constrained against a suction force exerted by said suction band and directed toward said run until at a distance along said deposition run said pre-formed fibriform material becomes supported and is subsequently maintained at a position spaced from said run by a particulate smoking material deposited on said run; and

depositing additional smoking material on said run subsequent to said distance as which said pre-formed fibriform material is supported by a particulate smoking material deposited on said run.

41. (New) A method of incorporating fibriform smoke-modifying material in smoking rod material, said method comprising;

feeding longitudinally a pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material having a degree of rigidity to a rod making machine along a feed path, said feed path in said machine extending in a travel direction of a smoking material deposition run of a suction band of said machine;

providing a guide for said pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material in said rod making machine;

constraining said pre-formed fibriform material by using said guide in said machine so that said pre-formed fibriform material follows said feed path spaced from said run of said suction band and is constrained against a suction force exerted by said suction band and directed toward said run until at a distance along said deposition run said pre-formed fibriform material becomes supported and is subsequently maintained at a position spaced from said run by a particulate smoking material deposited on said run;

providing a streamlined fairing on said guide; and

depositing additional smoking material on said run.

42. (Amended) A method of incorporating fibriform smoke-modifying material in smoking rod material, said method comprising;

feeding longitudinally a pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material

having a degree of rigidity to a rod making machine along a feed path, said feed path in said machine extending in a travel direction of a smoking material deposition run of a suction band of said machine;

providing a guide for said pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material in said rod making machine;

constraining said pre-formed fibriform material by using said guide in said machine so that said pre-formed fibriform material follows said feed path spaced from said run of said suction band and is constrained against a suction force exerted by said suction band and directed toward said run until at a distance along said deposition run said pre-formed fibriform material becomes supported and is subsequently maintained at a position spaced from said run by a particulate smoking material having a flow path and being deposited on said run;

enlarging said flow path of said particulate smoking material in a vicinity of said guide; and

depositing additional smoking material on said run.

43. (Amended) A method of incorporating fibriform smoke-modifying material in smoking rod material, said method comprising:

feeding longitudinally a pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material having a degree of rigidity to a rod making machine along a feed path, said feed path in said machine extending in a travel direction of a smoking material deposition run of a

suction band of said machine, said suction band being provided with a suction force;

providing a guide for said pre-formed fibriform smoke-modifying material in said rod making machine;

constraining said pre-formed fibriform material by using said guide in said machine so that said pre-formed fibriform material follows said feed path spaced from said run of said suction band and is constrained against said suction force toward said run until at a distance along said deposition run said pre-formed fibriform material becomes supported and is subsequently maintained at a position spaced from said run by a particulate smoking material deposited on said run;

varying said suction force at said portion of said smoking material deposition run adjacent said guide relative to said suction force over a remainder of said smoking material deposition run; and

depositing additional smoking material on said run.

REMARKS

Applicant, his principal representatives in Great Britain, and the undersigned have carefully reviewed the second, non-final Office Action of October 7, 2002 in the subject U.S. patent application, together with the prior art cited and relied on by the Examiner in the rejection of the claims. In response, the claims of the application have again been amended to even more clearly patentably define the present invention over the prior art cited and relied on by the Examiner. It is believed that the claims now